

TELEPHONE CALL RESTRICTOR AND RELATED METHOD OF PROGRAMMING

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A programmable telephone call restriction device and a related method for remotely programming the call restriction device from an interactive voice response system or other computer. The call restriction device is connected in parallel at any point along a telephone connecting the telephone to be restricted and the local telephone exchange. If the user of the telephone dials a number that appears in a list of restricted numbers, the call restriction device will generate DTMF signals that prevent the telephone line from being used even if a connection is made to the dialed number. To program the call restriction device, the telephone user must first establish a telephone connection to the IVR system by dialing an access number. In response to a voice prompt from the IVR system, the telephone user must then input a valid authorization code, i.e., a valid personal identification number (PIN). Only after a valid PIN has been inputted will the IVR system issue voice prompts instructing the telephone user to input desired call restrictions, including telephone numbers to be restricted. The IVR system will then program the call restriction device in accordance with the inputted call restrictions. Thereafter, the call restriction device will restrict, limit or allow calls to destination stations in accordance with those call restrictions.